

from our viewpoint...

Idea to lure folks limits who qualifies

Gov. Sam Brownback's initiative to lure people to rural Kansas counties by allowing them to skip paying state income tax for five years is an interesting idea, to say the least.

We hope it works. We fear it won't do much, because the program is limited to out-of-state residents. We believe the people most likely to move to rural areas are Kansans with ties to outstate areas who might want to move "home."

The incentives in the governor's program, now passed by both the House and Senate and awaiting his signature, won't apply to those people. If they want to move to rural counties, they'll still have to pay income taxes. The state won't help pay off their student loans.

And frankly, we think the state should include them in this plan. There is little to lose, and potentially, a lot to gain.

If someone living in Wichita or suburban Kansas City, say, decides to move back here, the state could stand to lose several thousand dollars in income taxes. That might smart a little, but only for five years.

After that the state would benefit from having more taxpayers in rural counties instead of less. Plus, it'd have saved the cost of building more highways and providing more services in urban areas.

It'd be years before enough people moved out to rural counties to require more of these "infrastructure" expenditures. Even if everyone took advantage of a provision where the state and local governments would split the cost of paying down these "settlers" college loans, the state would hardly notice.

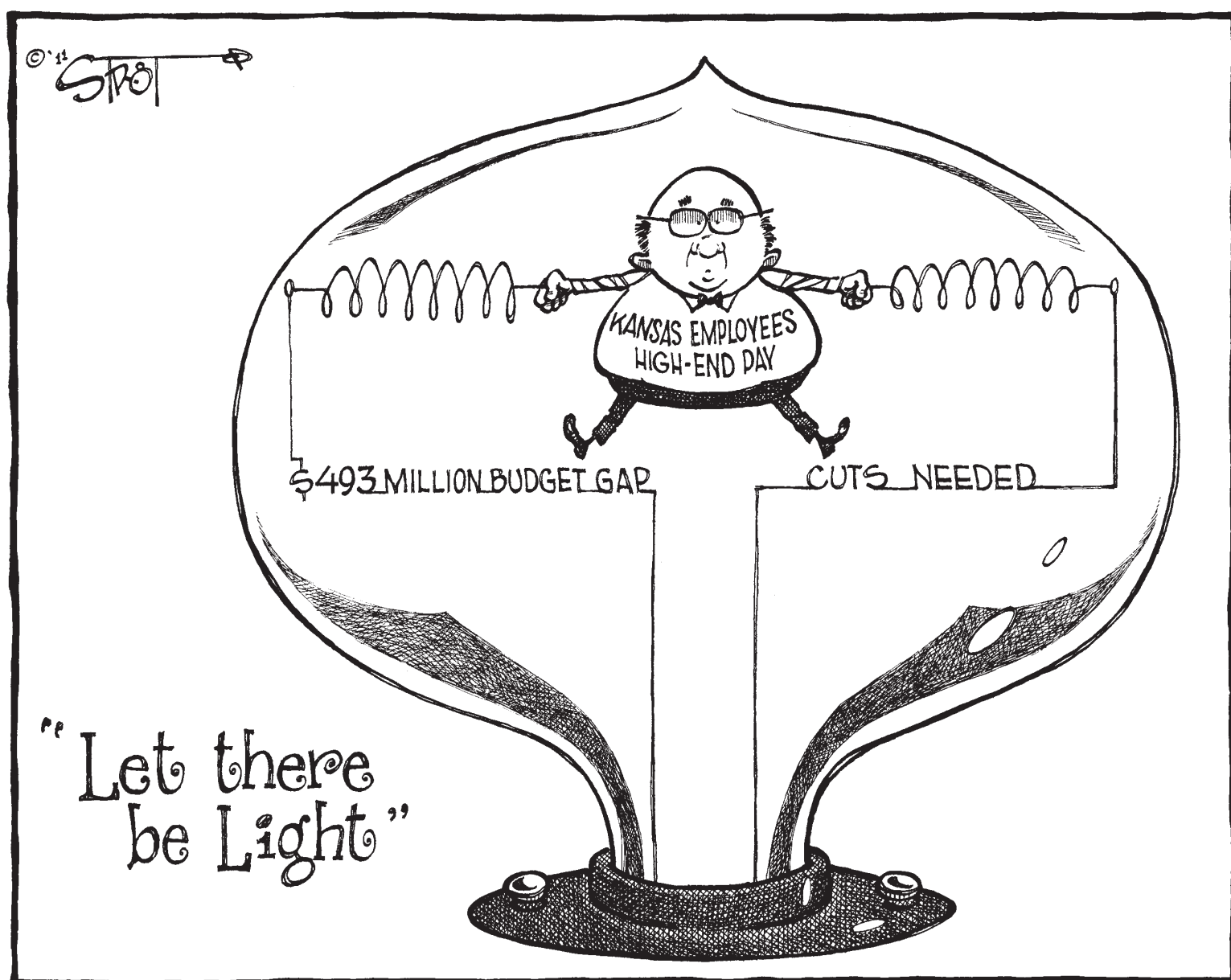
As written, the bill is expected to help rural towns recruit professionals such as doctors, dentists, lawyers and even teachers, many of whom graduate with expensive student loans to pay. That alone could be powerful, and we fully support the bill as passed by the Legislature.

But if we are talking about reversing a century of population decline in rural Kansas, we need to think big. We are going to need a lot of people. And Kansans are the most likely to move out here.

Many either grew up in rural Kansas, or their parents did. Many still have relatives, land or business interests in rural areas. Others know people who live out here, or come to rural Kansas to fish or hunt or look for antiques.

These people, the ones with ties here, are the most likely to help us reverse the population decline. And that is what everyone says needs to happen.

So let's open up this program to Kansas people, and make it work. — Steve Haynes



The facts about school bond vote

To the Editor:
Sacrifice? Absolutely!

The School Board is asking Sherman County taxpayers to support a \$14.9 million dollar bond issue. We have worked hard to research the best possible solution for the problems facing our district.

We feel this is in the best self interest of our students, parents, teachers, administration and community. It is extremely important to the future of Sherman County.

The decision to move to a two building concept was made on a standing four to three board vote. The majority of your elected board is in support of a two building concept.

It should be known the vote to take this decision to the community in the form of a bond election, was a unanimous decision by your School Board. That is a fact.

I hope you have taken the time to attend the community meetings. If you have, you should

G your schools, community
• guest column

have an idea of what you will get if you vote YES.

Two upgraded facilities with climate controlled classrooms, a like new learning environment, the latest technological capabilities, and a FEMA approved storm shelter the entire community can benefit from. All of this at a very low interest rate, partially funded by a 5.4 million dollar bond at zero percent and a 3.2 million dollar contribution from the state of Kansas. Fact.

I feel it is very important to think about what you will get if your vote is No. We will continue to put more of your hard-earned dollars into

antiquated buildings that need upgrades.

Our district does not have the money needed to do these upgrades, much less maintain the current buildings in the way they need to be maintained. If our district continues to take money out of our budget to maintain these buildings, it will leave us with less resources to put into the most important aspect of any district — EDUCATION.

There have been many smoke screens and distractions that have taken away from the focus and the facts of this move. Now that the facts have become available, I encourage everyone to take the opportunity to get out and vote.

If you feel your questions have not been answered, please feel free to give me a call. The future of Goodland School District (USD 352) is in your hands.

Gary Slough,
Goodland School Board Member

Bond issue matters to a lot of people

The School Bond issue is something that matters to a lot of people. When I say a lot of people, I mean generations of people.

The young families who live in Goodland are looking at their future on April 5th. Those young families have kids they are sending to these schools in Goodland and those kids are the leaders of the next generation. They're getting their education right now in our schools, some of which are not up to the quality of what they should be for a sufficient learning environment.

If we want to grow this community into what it could be, it all starts with the schools.

The citizens of Goodland always talk about the town having people leave and not having many new families coming into our town. If Goodland is going to grow the way we want it to, it needs to have a reason for people to move here.

If a family thought about moving into Goodland after the bond issue passes, think of the possibilities that family would have just in our schools. We have a growing college in Northwest Tech that provides opportunities Goodland has not seen in some time and now the improved schools we have invested our time and money in. That new family moving in would be impressed by the dedication the people of Goodland put in to the youth of their community, not to mention the future the family would have here.

If a family moves here if this bond issue does not pass, what will people think when they know we are using an out of date Junior High School along with having multiple schools that could combine and cut cost and



from our readers

• to the editor

improve efficiency? The bond issue can make Goodland known as a town stuck in the past, or Goodland can be known as a city moving in the right direction.

I as a student walk the halls of Goodland High School nearly everyday and have done so for four years. It is very obvious there is a lot of empty space in the high school. The talk for years now has been about moving the Junior High into the high school and it makes a lot of sense. Easily, these schools could be combined and plans of how to do so are simple and make so much more sense than having two schools half full and spending money lighting, heating and wasting half of each school.

Now with all of that said, I know in tough times it is hard to spend money on things some think are not necessary at the moment, but let me put things into perspective.

If we spend the money now and put everything together correctly and do what has needed to be done for a long time, money will flow back into our local economy by way of new families, teachers, janitors and countless other jobs moving into town to experience the new city of Goodland.

If we put quality equipment and make our schools more efficient in return we will build a progressive community the way it should be built. Instead of partially doing it and buying

the cheapest equipment and having it break down or not be efficient, we can do it right once and for all.

If all of this happens Goodland can be known as a community people look up to and hope to have their community resemble one day. That could all happen on April 5th. You as a community decide that.

Jeremy Mills
Goodland

To the Editor:

If flag burning is an expression of free speech... set fire to the robes of the Supreme Court... Talk doth not equal actions!

U.S. Bill of rights, No. 1 freedom of speech... of press... to peaceably assemble... (preaching in the park) free speech... (sound truck at midnight) - disturbing the peace-

Profanity - the vain attempt of a feebly mind, to express itself forcibly

Libel, slander and gossip, like feathers in the wind, can't be recalled!

Graffiti may be free speech (press) yet vandalizing the place... Ponder the consequences of thy words! Deeds! "Therefore all things, what so ever ye would that men, should do to you; do ye even so to them." MATT 7:12A

Frank Sowers
Benkelman, Neb.

P.S. If boys are (boys) girls (girls), there are boy scouts, girl scouts, boys basketball, girls volleyball. -Shame on any girl in coed wrestling... the adults permitting it, are delinquent.

where to write

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The Goodland Star-News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters and letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive will be rejected. The deadline for letters on the April 5 election will be noon on Wednesday, March 30 for the April 1 edition. No letters will be accepted on the election after that deadline. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with address and phone numbers, by e-mail to: star.news@nwkansas.com.